

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, SA, US

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CONTRACT BETWEEN ERDA AND SASOL

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1. ERDA IS PRINCIPAL U.S. TECHNICAL AGENCY CHARGED WITH FINDING ALTERNATIVES TO OIL IMPORTS DEPENDENCY. A PRINCIPAL PART OF THIS EFFORT HAS BEEN THE SEARCH FOR WAYS IN WHICH THE EXTENSIVE U.S. COAL RESOURCES MIGHT BE USED IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE MANNER. ERDA PERSONNEL VISITED SASOL IN JULY AND AUGUST 1975 AND JANUARY 1976. AS A RESULT OF THESE VISITS ERDA FEELS THAT SASOL'S EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF COAL CONVERSION TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RESEARCH STRATEGIES IN THIS FIELD.

2. ERDA WISHES TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH SASOL WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE FLUOR CORPORATION, ACTING AS ERDA'S AGENT, TO: A) OBTAIN AT A COST OF ABOUT \$1,150,000 THE AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY ON THE SASOL I COAL GASIFICA-
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TION/ LIQUIFACTION PROCESS; AND B) COMPARE HYDROCARBON

PRODUCTION VIA THE FISCHER-TROPSCH ROUTE AND THE METHANOL CONVERSION ROUTE. ERDA ESTIMATES THAT UP TO 18 MONTHS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO NEGOTIATE THE CONTRACT AND TO CARRY OUT THE PROPOSED STUDY. PERIODIC SHORT

VISITS BY ERDA TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS TO SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE REQUIRED TO GET THE PROJECT STARTED AND TO MONITOR THE PROGRAM.

3. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY VIEWS ON THIS PROPOSED CONTRACT TO ASSIST US IN REACHING A PROMPT DECISION ON THE PROPOSAL.

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